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Subject: Signs of the Times.

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OF

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PREACHED BY

HENRY WARD BEECHER.



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SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

“When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather to-day; for the sky is red and lowering. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?”—MATT. xvi., 2, 3.

An account of the same interview is given a little differently in the twelfth chapter of Luke:

“When ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straightway ye say, There cometh a shower; and so it is. And when ye see the south wind blow, ye say, There will be heat; and it cometh to pass. Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time?”

The Scribes and Pharisees were so busy with the instruments of religion, and the doctrines of religion, and the customs of religion, that they had little opportunity to take care of men, or to be interested in them, or to see what the providence of God was doing among them, or to watch the movement of things, good or bad.

The ground was shaking under their feet; they were standing on the eve of events which were to eclipse the glory of the Jewish people; they were within a hand's breadth of the greatest catastrophe that had ever visited their nation; they were within an arm's length of that revolution which was to bring down their capital and scatter their people; already the symptoms were in the sky, and the tremblings were in the earth; and yet they did not see them nor believe them. And Jesus reproached them, that they were so observant of the mutable appearances in the heavens, but were blind to great moral events. In other words, their refusal to look and see what God was doing by his providence in the time in which they lived was a matter of reproach, and of just reproach, on the part of the Master.

Let us not fall into the same condemnation, nor consider anything which deeply concerns the welfare of our country and our kind as unworthy of our consideration.

I am going to speak, to-night, upon a theme suggested by the “*strikes*” of the working men; and in respect to the whole matter

to which that particular thing is incidental, or of which it is but an accident or development—the universal stirring up of the working men of the civilized nations of the globe, the present tendencies, what they portend, and what relations they sustain to Christianity and to civilization, and what duties they impose upon us if we are wise enough to discern the signs of the times.

I remark, first, that never before, probably, in the history of the world, was there such *organization of laboring men* as there is now. There have been times when guilds were formed, each particular trade organizing a self-protecting guild. This is an inheritance which has come down to us from the mediæval days; and it stretches back in ruder forms far anterior to those. The peculiarity of our time is this: that each industry which organizes for its self-protection and helpfulness is coming into affiliation with its neighboring industries, so that working men everywhere, and all kinds of working men, of the scores, and scores of different trades, are having an understanding with each other. And that is not all. The working men of contiguous nations are coming into relations of amity and sympathy and coöperation, and are stretching out their affiliations so that now it may be said that the working men of the civilized globe are in sympathy and that there is an understanding among them which is becoming more and more perfect every year. The power of organization I need not explain to you. It is a tremendous power. Wisely made, wisely managed, wisely directed, it may be said that it gives the scepter to Labor. And it holds the scepter only because it has the vote. For the vote is the opening vial or bottle of the fable, and the genie has gone out and swelled to incredible proportions, and never can be put back again. Men who have the vote have access to every single element of power in society; and if they understand themselves, and organize skillfully and wisely, they will be stronger than the throne. Every government stands on the vote; every administration stands on votes; every policy stands upon votes; the security of property, of order, and of life itself, stands on votes. And the working men of the globe have in enormous disproportion the elements of universal power. That is, they have *numbers*; and numbers will carry the day, where they are wisely organized and directed.

The great trouble of past times, so far as the working men are concerned, has been that they have been outwitted. They have not had the wisdom to regulate their forces. They have failed for want of guidance. They have had power,—physical power, and even political power; but they have not known how to use it. As a slen-

der man with a little rapier, can, by his dexterity and skill, slay a hundred Goliaths, any one of whom could crush him with a finger-stroke; as the great, coarse, animal strength of a giant is not a match for the rare skill of the subtle fencer, slight though he may be; so the great mass of the working men have been swayed hither and thither by the dexterity of wily politicians, of managing men, who have had power and skill in state-craft; but now, in this later day, with a growing intelligence, and with an increase of wealth among men, organization means something different from what it meant a hundred, or five hundred, or a thousand years ago.

I do not know but you think that the organization of the working men of the globe is a thing to be laughed at, and turned off with a word; but I do not think that it is a matter to be passed over lightly. I cast the plummet of thought into it, and I perceive that the depths of it are too great for men to despise. And on the whole, with all their mistakes, with all their errors, and with all the heresies that are for the present wrapped up in their doctrines, I am in hearty sympathy with these working men. I hail this movement of theirs. It is a sign of life. Society does not lie like unleavened dough. It is leavening. And although it will bring some disturbance, and create some revolutions, and lead to a great many errors, and entail a great deal of mischief, nevertheless, I thank God that there is a rising of men from the bottom of society toward the top. My heart goes with the men who are poor and ignorant, and who are working for liberty to be larger and better.

Quite independent of the fact that it is the spring-time and germinant period of the classes who have been neglected, there are special reasons why I look upon this development with sympathy. I sympathize at heart, thoroughly, with the feeling that labor, as a thing which has been trodden under foot and despised, should be elevated. I know very well what the old philosophies were. The Jews have been ahead of civilization in almost every element. You cannot afford to despise the Jews. You are the sons of Abraham yourselves. Your commonwealth was born out of Jewish ideas. Your civilization was borrowed from the Jews, very largely. I honor and revere that stock. They honored labor, and were ahead of others in honoring it. They honored it at the time when many of the republics of the Orient despised it. When Greece, by her philosophers, was determining that her commonwealth should expel from citizenship all mechanic craftsmen, and all who engaged in manual labor, then the great Hebrew commonwealth was making labor honorable. But almost only there was

it honored. Generally speaking, taking the world together, labor has not been regarded as honorable. If a man has been obliged to earn his living by the sweat of his brow, that fact has been considered *prima facie* evidence that he lacked manhood and worth. It has been considered vulgar for a man to work with his hands; and men have not been disabused of that idea even to this day. A lawyer may go to the plow—that is no disgrace; a minister may own a farm—that is very creditable; a merchant may carry on agricultural pursuits—there is nothing out of the way in that. That is, if a man has other means of gaining a livelihood, it is well enough for him to engage in what are called manual occupations; but if a man is neither a lawyer, nor a minister, nor a merchant, but is a poor man, and has to work, guiding the plow, or performing other duties on a farm, or engaging in physical labor of any sort, to earn his bread, people think it is vulgar.

“No, I do not think it is vulgar.” I beg your pardon, you do. If your daughter were going to marry a man of slender stature, and no brains, but with much property and a good standing in fashionable society, you would think that that was a favorable connection; but if she were going to marry a man who was a worker in the soil, and who had never been out of his native town, but who had a noble man’s heart in him, and was every inch a man, you would think that that was a mis-alliance—a poor match for your child. The only reason in the world that you could give would be that he was a worker, and that your daughter was not intended for such a connection as that.

Now, I hail the day when work becomes discontented—for there is a sense in which discontent means aspiration. I do not say that all discontent is honorable; but I say that that discontent which thinks, which plans, which waits, which means improvement, which organizes for improvement, and which is taking every step that it can toward improvement, is honorable. I hold it to be a result of the working of divine providence.

I believe that the day will dawn when work will come up, not simply in skill and intelligence, but in moral worth. The day will come when a man will go through college for the sake of being a better mechanic; when a man will acquire a thorough education for the sake of making a better farmer; when a man will educate himself for the sake of larger manhood, though he be a worker.

I perceive, also, in this impatience of the great working mass of men in civilized nations a token of growth in another way. There are circumstances in which men who are degraded do not find their condition burdensome, and are not impatient under it. The lower

classes who lived in Queen Elizabeth's time did not find their condition burdensome. They lived almost as stalled cattle live. They were essentially rude and undeveloped; and their condition was more nearly fitted to their actual interior state than a higher condition would have been. But as civilization has increased, and as the comforts of life have increased, the working-men have perceived that a higher condition is preferable; and the condition which they would have taken contentedly in the time of Elizabeth, they would resent now.

That is the law of development. We rise from a lower state to a higher; and when we are in the higher we resent the conditions of the lower. Our appetites increase, and our tastes increase, and our wants increase. That is barbarism which says that simplicity is the highest condition of mankind, and that he is the richest man who wants the least. I say that a man is on the way toward civilization in proportion to the number of mouths which you get opened in him. I do not say that he is the most civilized who has the greatest number of things put into his mouth—the most wine, the most meat, the most bread, the most of all forms of luxury. A superfluity of these things, and the enjoyment of them by the appetite, I do not believe in; but I do believe that when a man grows, God opens a mouth in him, not for the sustenance of the body, but to feed tastes which lie deep within. Uncultivated men in civilized society begin to have affectional wants. They begin to have refinements. They begin to have aspirations. When a degraded peasant comes to America, creeping out of his turf hole at home, he is quite willing to nuzzle again in the dirt in America; but becoming more familiar with things around about him, and buying a little piece of ground, he settles down in a village, and his ideas begin to enlarge. He sees what his neighbor's children are; and as his own children increase about him he has a pride and ambition for them. He is discontented with his one room, and wants more rooms. He begins to want a floor. He begins to want a place to sleep in which is not a kitchen. He begins to want something finer on his bed. He is no longer satisfied with straw. A box does not seem to him good as a table any longer. It makes a difference to him whether he cuts his food with a jack-knife, or eats with a knife and fork. He sees the difference between his and other people's manner of spreading the table. His taste develops. He covets things for their beauty. He has other desires than those which the senses feed, higher, purer, finer. And what do these things indicate but the development of finer relishes and appetites in him? He comes, gradually, to a state in which

he is pained by things which ten years ago were matters of indifference to him.

This is right. It is a sign of growth. There is a sense in which the whole condition of the globe is elevated when men manifest a desire for greater leisure. The desire for leisure is a worthy desire when it is inspired by an ambition for culture in order that there may be a fuller development of manhood. I honor a man who cannot forever live in the presence of men who are higher than he and not desire to rise higher himself. I do not mean that a poor man should desire to live in a four-story brown-stone house with the "modern conveniences," because there are men around about him who live in such houses; but if a man is living in a community where there are those who have finer tastes and feelings than he has, he has a right to desire those tastes and feelings; and he has a right to say to himself, "Give me time enough, and I can develop them in myself—or in my children, if not in myself." I honor a man who has an ambition to grow. I glory in that growth which crowds off the leaves of last year in order that there may be developed a new and better crop on every branch this year.

Then there is another thing which I mark as peculiar to large towns and cities, and which is as true of this city as of others. I refer to the irregularity of progress, the partialism of progress, which may be seen by those who will observe it. There is in almost every community a separation going on in society. This separation is becoming more and more apparent. The distance is becoming wider in every decade of years between the cultured and the uncultured; between the rich and the poor; between the different sections of society. The top goes up all the time faster than the bottom does. The distance between the top of society and the bottom measures the unhealth of society. The top cannot healthily go up unless it takes the bottom with it. At first, when men are undeveloped, they may all live together, and may be in fellowship, though they may be low; but as they begin to be stimulated and developed, good men go higher than bad men; educated men go higher than uneducated men; skilled men go higher than unskilled men; but they still have a duty of fellowship and brotherhood. Every man ought to be solicitous of his own development; but every man should also be solicitous to draw up those who are around about him. The business of any class is not to help themselves alone, but to help all other classes. As men begin to be refined, you will see evolving out of their new condition a gradual development of the pride of refinement, and the selfishness of refinement, and the fastidiousness of refinement, and the revulsion of

refinement at those vulgarities which characterize the great mass of their fellow men. Men in society organize, stratify and divide; the bottom remains at the bottom, and perhaps sinks lower, while the top shoots upward.

Society is not and cannot be homogeneous. There are causes forever at work to produce classes. If the classes are in mutual antagonism, society is full of intestine war. If society is a unit, like the human body, made up of superior and inferior members, but all in vital sympathy with each other, and all serving a common end, then no harm, but much good may result from classes. The mischief begins with class indifference, proceeds with class selfishness, and is consummated in class despotism. Even those influences which, like intelligence and religion, tend to bring men together, when they act upon only a portion of society, produce inequality and relative disturbance.

Anything, then, that shall work up the great mass of men from a state of indifference or torpidity, and which shall teach them industry, self-government, coöperation, patient striving and waiting for a better condition, will tend to their benefit and to that of society at large. That cannot be a healthy condition in which a few prosper and the great mass are drudges.

Then I must call your attention to another great danger—namely, the increasing power of organized and combined capital in our land, and the despotism which tends to grow out of it. There is probably no other nation where there is so much wealth per head as there is in the great northern tier of States in America; and there is no other nation where the capacity to make wealth is so great as here.

I do not mean that there is not sagacity and skill in England, or in France, or in Germany, or in Italy. We have much to learn from these nations. They surpass us in many things. We are indebted to them for what they are teaching us in various departments of industry. But taking the populations through, the wealth-earning power of the industrial citizenship of America probably transcends that of the citizenship of any other nation on the globe. While the best workmen of other nations may surpass those of America, taking all the working men of America together, there is no other land in the world which is so productive of wealth as ours.

We are not only producing wealth but we are increasing it at a fearful ratio in the hands of a comparatively few. You have seen, many of you, and I have seen (for I have lived through a generation of men), almost a revolution in the matter of wealth. When I was born, and where I was born, a man that was worth ten

thousand dollars was a rich man. He that was worth fifty thousand dollars was looked up to as very rich. I remember when a man who had a hundred thousand dollars was considered surpassingly rich. But a man that has a hundred thousand dollars to-day, says, "I have some yeast, and if I could get some dough to put it in I think I could raise a batch of wealth." A man is not looked upon as rich until he has many hundreds of thousands of dollars. It is easier nowadays to find a man that is worth a million dollars than in my day it was to find a man that was worth a hundred thousand dollars. It is not strange to find men who are worth five or ten millions. There are some men who are worth fifty millions, and even a hundred millions. There are not a few in our cities who are millionaires, literally; and the number is increasing. They do not all like to have it known. They do not all show their wealth. There is a Nemesis of taxation which makes many men humble, so that they do not like to have it known how much they are worth.

Such is the power of Wealth, that when held by a class, and used ambitiously, it becomes as despotic as an Absolute Monarchy. An ambitious Plutocracy has in its hands, I had almost said, manners, customs, laws, institutions, and governments themselves.

But, over and above all these inequalities which work mischief to the less favored classes in society, there is one danger of Wealth that demands the serious attention of every patriotic citizen. I mean the alarming increase of enormous wealth in gigantic Corporations.

Consider the capital in the hands of a few men represented by the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad. "Their line has gone out into all the world." It owns or can control hundreds of millions of capital. Its dependants are an army. Its contracts, by the promise of gain, hold under cogent influence all who deal in wood, iron, wool, stone, oil, machinery, and general merchandise. This huge capital, in the hands of one or a few men, can build up or beat down; can enrich or impoverish whom it will. At its touch gold becomes ashes and dirt becomes gold. The Erie Railroad, of fragrant memory, has a power scarcely less. The State of New York is shut in between these iron walls. Hanging over the State is this enormous body of corporate wealth, subject to the will of a handful of men, and growing in amount, facilities, and dangerousness, every year. The Pennsylvania Central, with its arms and hands stretched out to the very Pacific Ocean, is liable to be an even more gigantic Despot.

I do not lose sight of the benefits conferred on the com-

munity by these great thoroughfares. Kept within rightful bounds, their service to public wealth is incalculable. They are wings and feet to commerce. They stimulate a universal industry. They bring near together the widely separated populations of this continent: they give coherence and unity to scattered industries; by their swiftness, they in effect add hours to every man's days, and substantially lengthen human life by doubling the product of men's hands. But, out of these great and unmeasured blessings, there rises up this danger of Corporate Power,—like a mountain out of fruitful fields, about whose head storms tread. Such concentration of capital gives to a few men, acting in concert, a power of influence which can crush down all ordinary opposition and make them masters of the legislation of the country.

Acting through the directories of two or three Railroads, the money power of America may set at defiance all control, and dictate to legislatures the laws, and to the people their policies. The more because our legislatures have become so corrupt. The shame of America, to-day, is the corruption of legislative bodies. In many States of the Union money has become a controlling influence in the passage of laws; politics is next in power, and simple justice for its own sake, is something almost unknown. Even the men elected for the purpose of reforming such abuse, no sooner breathe the moral malaria of the legislative halls than virtue is in chills and avarice in a fever. Why do we think so ill of Sing Sing and so well of Albany? In what are the thieves in the Penitentiary worse than the thieves in the Legislature? The rogues in prison, acting with but little concert, robbed individuals, and firms; the organized rogues, in legislative clothing, dishonestly, in the habiliments of law, rob the whole community.

Are these bodies, from whom come all our laws, likely to resist the temptations of vast corporations who carry gold mines in their coffers? Will those who make their bed in the very dirt of the streets, refuse the bed of kings? Have our courts been able to withstand the assaults of money corporations? Even when judges are inaccessible to pecuniary bribes, they are unable to withstand the wear and tear of political influence, the enthusiasms of public sentiment hotly kindled. Neither courts or legislatures can interpose a barrier to the will of corporative wealth, when it assumes the vast proportions it has now taken, and when it grasps such a variety of interests and such a scope of territory! There are three Railroad corporations that have the power,—should they combine, as easily they might, as in time inevitably they must,—to control national parties, to determine the commercial policy, to dictate legislation,

to elect governors or depose them to place whom they will in the Presidential chair, to fill the United States Senate with their friends, and to pack the House of Representatives. Let things go on for ten years as they have for the past twenty, and the councils of this nation will issue from the directors' rooms of our great Railroad Corporations. It will make no difference who sits in the White House. Some Vanderbilt or Scott will be our President.

Far be it from me to say that the remedy for these evils, already so great, but whose future is yet more portentous, is to be found in anything yet developed among working men. And yet to the great laboring interests of the country must we look for an antagonism which will at length restrain the overreaching ambition of coöperative capital. Mammon is our chief adversary to-day. Many thought that when slavery was overthrown the devils had gone out of the nation. Nay, they only changed quarters, and as yet no steep place has been found down which the infernal brood has rushed to destruction. Mammon, enthroned in privilege, is our danger and our despot. Capital may, if wisely used, overhang the land like beneficent clouds, dropping down bounty upon every leaf and blade that grows; or, it may hang above us surcharged with lightning, and move like a destroying storm.

If the poor see that riches set men free from the law, obedience to the law will be regarded as one more evil inflicted by poverty. Why should Work be under law, and Crime be above law? Men often complain of the lawless violence of ignorant men; of the turbulence and violence of the lower classes; of the evils to be feared in the "dangerous classes." But our "dangerous class" is not at the bottom, it is near the top of society. Riches without law is more dangerous than Poverty without law. While Labor organizes to defend itself against the exactions of Capital, it may raise up a power which shall defend the whole community, and, while it ennobles industry, shall, at the same time, establish morality. The laboring men will always be the majority. If they are educated, temperate, wise, they will control the destiny of the nation. It is to them that we look in the future.

My heart goes with the toiling million. The wise and strong need no sympathy. Their strength is their defense. They are grown up men. But the great mass of working men are relatively weak. They need sympathy. Mine is not an undistinguishing sympathy, however; I do not pretend that poverty is virtue, nor that riches are criminal. I have no vulgar ends to gain by flattering the working man. On the other hand, I shall show a better friendship, a wiser sympathy, if I criticise the mistakes of their organizations,

and point out some of those principles to which they must conform, if permanent prosperity is to be had.

1. There is danger that laboring men, in combining for mutual protection, will organize around the core of *selfishness*. This will be to imitate the very evil which makes corporate wealth dangerous. It will have the inherent and essential mischief of the class-spirit. Selfishness is the bane of life. It will be no less destructive and dishonoring among laboring men, than among capitalists. If the workingmen care nothing for the whole community, but only or chiefly for themselves, they will deserve no sympathy. Each trade may have a special benevolence for its own members, but the whole is more important than any fraction, and the commonwealth should be included in the intents and purposes of workmen's plans. If labor is to fight capital by a rivalry in selfishness then society will be but a carcass lying between the vultures. Labor must be more manly, more robust in virtue, more patriotic, more public spirited, and more intelligent than organized capital, or it will go down, in the conflict. It is this rising and extending sympathy between men of different trades, and between the workingmen of different nations, that inspires our sympathy and our hope that labor may bring classes and nations into sympathy and coöperation, which have hitherto been discordant or oppugnant.

2. Workingmen are in danger of spending their force in following glittering social theories. Certainly, they have as much right to speculate as any others. But, no degree of intelligence will ever enable any class or individual to forecast the shape of society in the future. The world has its own law of development, and society will make its own paths, refusing all speculative lines that may be drawn to coax it. It is a thousand pities that clubs, unions, leagues, and societies should waste their forces in propagating airy fancies; in building society-castles in the air. Society takes its shape from what men *are* and not from what they *think*. Industry, ingenuity, intelligence, frugality, genuine kindness between man and man, self-restraint; in short, brain-power in the superior faculties, this is the raw material out of which God will shape that better Future for which we all long. We can provide the materials, but God is the only Architect.

3. Men are in danger of regarding Work as an evil, and Leisure as an end, in itself. Labor is a salable commodity. To raise the price of it by legitimate means is fair and wise. But it will be a supreme folly for poor men to decrease the quantity of labor in the community. While here and there a few men are overworked, the great mass of men do not work enough. What we want is freedom

of men to work, to work as long as they will, and to sell their labor in the best market. Odious as is the despotism of Capital, it is not a whit more odious than Labor-despotism. Freedom is the universal need of men;—freedom of conscience, freedom in thought, civil freedom; liberty of speech, of vote, of work; restraint upon the animal, but liberty to the divine, that is in man!

For special reasons, and as a temporary expedient to gain some eminent good, men may curtail labor and restrain their liberties. But this must be the occasional, and not the permanent—medicine, not food.

4. There is danger, too, that the working men will be godless and irreligious, and therefore shallow and narrow. It is not necessary that the coöperative labor of the world shall be Protestant, or Catholic; it is not necessary that it shall join itself to this or that sect; but Labor is absolutely incomplete without a deep moral sense. If labor becomes atheistic, unchristian, antagonistic to the great truths of the gospel, it will commit suicide.

Jesus Christ was a laborer's son, after the flesh, and was himself a carpenter, and wrought with his hands, and lived all his life in sympathy with the laboring classes of his people; and all the truths breathed from his lips were truths of sympathy and humanity which it behooves every working man on earth to take heed to. The gospel of Christ is the poor man's *Magna Charta*. If poor men who are disfranchised, and who are seeking to reinstate themselves, and gain room for aspiration and growth, reject the Bible, and the Lord Jesus Christ, and the truths that came from him, they throw away the charter of their liberty. There never was a stable liberty born into this world until after Christ had shown the way. For liberty must be based upon that benevolence which shall expunge selfishness from supreme control. You never will have ripe justice until you have that which springs out of filial love to God and impartial love to man.

5. There is a danger, too, that these coöperative associations will set aside the great law of subordination. You cannot by legislation bring all men up to an equality. There are certain great laws which are as inevitable as fate. You can make all men equal to each other politically; you can make all men equal before the law; you can make all men equal in rights and duties; but you cannot make all men equal in their earning-power. It is a species of rank injustice to undertake to strike an equality between one class and another. If you make the wages of a weak and ignorant man the same as the wages of a strong and wise man, you do that which is fundamentally unjust. It is not a kindness but an injury. It is

demoralizing. It disregards a distinction which God made, and which will always continue to exist. It takes away the stimulus to development and industry. If men find that the indolent and the industrious are treated alike, that the finest and the highest workers and the slovenliest and lowest workers are rewarded alike—are graded to the same price—there is taken away from them the fundamental motive by which manhood is stirred up, and ingenuity is quickened, and industry is developed. It destroys individualism. It leads toward that consolidation of society in which the nation is everything and the individual citizen nothing.

6. Nothing can more directly benefit laboring men than that development which education gives. For, besides the range of resources, the new pleasures, the larger susceptibility to enjoyment which education gives, it significantly influences the price which labor brings. For, he who sells work sells brains. Price is largely, and as a general rule, determined by the quality and quantity of thought-power infused into work. "Skilled work" is nothing but work vitalized by finer brain-power than belongs to routine work. Every workman sells something of himself in what he creates. Skill, fidelity, taste, imagination, bring high prices. What workmen need most of all is education. They do not know how to use the half of their powers. Their qualities lie in them undug, unsmelted, uncast, unfinished. They bring to market the products of their lower faculties, and murmur that the price is low. Let them improve their loom and the fabrics will rise in value. The workman's head is his shop. If there be few tools there and poor ones, why should he expect profit?

A thing is worth what that part of the brain is worth which entered into the creating of it. A thing which requires the action of the lowest part of the brain is not worth much. It does not take much brain-power to dig a ditch. Anybody can throw out dirt; and should a man who throws out dirt be paid as much as a man who organizes dirt, and finds new uses for it? If you put into your work the lowest part of your brain, you take the lowest price; if you put into it the middle part of your brain you take the middle price; and if you put in the highest part you take the highest price. There is a gradation fixed in the nature of things. It is a principle which enters into the organization of society, that the bottom of a man is not worth so much as the top, and if a man puts his bottom forces into his work his work is not worth so much as if he put his top forces into it. To the end of time the artist will be worth more than the artisan, the artisan will be worth more than the laborer, and the laborer will be worth more than the drudge.

One remedy for the disadvantages from which labor is suffering, is to educate men ; to teach them how to work ; to teach them how to think, and how to think finely, and generously, and wisely, and beneficently, and religiously, as creatures whose sphere is bounded, not by this horizon, but by God's horizon. What men need is more manhood, and a better understanding of that in them by which they are to put into their work more substance, more quality, more honesty, more fidelity, and more adaptation to a final happiness, to a higher life, and to nobler tastes. Everything which tends to bring the nobler parts of men, as embodiments, into their work ; everything that tends to lift up men's work to a higher standard, is an element in the solution of this great question of labor. And no combination or invention can stop the operation of Nature's decree in this matter. The stream may be checked in its course by banks and dams, but these will be only temporary obstructions ; for in the end the law is inevitable that it is the brain that gives value, and that it is quality or kind of brain that determines prices. He who takes the contrary view is in insurrection with the law of Nature, and is in the same condition that a man would be in who should enter into a conspiracy against gravity, or electricity, or light, or any other great force in Nature.

We are in the midst of this experiment, and we ought to be patient with it. We ought not to think that it is going to corrupt society, and destroy us. There is much in the movements of laboring men to be criticised. They are men who are feeling their way toward a larger life, toward a nobler manhood ; and I say, "God speed them." At the same time I make criticisms upon them ; but I make them for their good and health, and not for their harm and hindrance. On the other hand, it is our duty to look more to the welfare of others, and not so exclusively to our own welfare. We who live in sealed houses, not thinking so much how we shall have good as how we shall have better ; not thinking so much how we shall have better as how we shall have the best ; and not thinking so much how we shall have the best as how we shall have it more abundantly—we are to ask ourselves, in spinning our silken web about us, "Are we discharging those duties which unite us in sympathy with the great mass of men that are about us?"

We, by our extravagance, squeeze the merchant, and compel him in turn to squeeze the manufacturer, who in turn squeezes the laborer. The impulse which our extravagance sets in motion acts with terrible violence, and grinds our poor brother to powder ; and if, indignant, he turns, not knowing what to fight, and fights everything that stands in his way between the top and the bottom of

society, it is not for us to throw stones at him, who have been the cause and occasion of his offense. It is for us, rather, to come into the large spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ who descended from the height of heaven to live among men, made himself a servant, and, even when he sat at the feasts of the great men who opened their houses to him, so recognized his relations to the poorest in society, that the publicans and sinners thronged in after him, and sat at meat with him unrebuked. He is your Master. By his name you are called. Have you his spirit? And when men who are low down, struggling, unfortunate, undeveloped, rude, ignorant, unrefined—when they see you, do they press after you, and take you by the hand, and find in your heart a fraternizing response?

There are duties in many directions in society—a duty in ecclesiasticism, a duty in sociology, a duty of philanthropy, and other duties—which couple us with the working classes of our time and nation; and we shall not discharge these duties unless we discern the signs of the times, and hold out efficient help and succor to those who are our brothers and friends underneath our feet.

So, I say, May God keep you from the cultivation of selfish refinement. May God keep you from the exquisite cruelty of religious selfishness. May God keep you from the infidelity and atheism of indifference toward those around about you who are bone of your bone and flesh of your flesh. May God breathe into you the sweet spirit of his own dear Son, who gave his life a ransom for many, and teach you to use your life so that it shall be a ransom, and emancipate and bring up many who are cast down or oppressed in your midst.

PRAYER BEFORE THE SERMON.

Our Father, we thank thee for the mercies of the day. That our prayers have been heard; that the spirit of the Sabbath has been upon us; for quiet in our homes, and in our several abiding places; for meditation; for all social fellowship; for our joys to come in the Lord; for our forelooking; for our sight within the veil,—we thank thee. We rejoice that we fall under the influence of thy Spirit; that we are not citizens of any mean country or city; that we are more than we seem; that we are the sons of God, though it doth not appear; that we are journeying through the wilderness—if it be a wilderness; that we are aspiring to a nobler life, to a better home, to imperishable riches, to honors that corrupt not society, and whose pleasures do not effeminate; that we are drawing near to that higher and better sphere where we shall see thee as thou art, and know even as we are known.

But grant, we pray thee, while we comfort ourselves by the way, looking forward, and by imagination partaking of the heavenly estate, that we may not retreat from the conflicts of this life, from its duties, from its necessary burdens. Grant that we may have manhood; and that we may have robust patience; and that we may accept at the hand of the Lord that which he shall send, grateful for mercies. May we not seek to avoid even chastisements. May we rejoice in prosperity, and may we not refuse to receive adversity. May we bear the yoke willingly. May we learn that thy yoke is easy, and that thy burden is light, and accept them uncomplainingly. Why should we complain, who are disciples, when our Lord and Master suffered for us? Why should we complain who are but for a day here, and who are to advance to an eternal glory of blessedness hereafter? Oh, grant that we may see ourselves, not as within the horizon of time, but as creatures of immortality; and that we may temper our joy and sorrow; that we may restrain ourselves, both in prosperity and adversity, by the thought of our relations to thee and to the whole future life!

We pray that thou wilt forgive us the sins of impatience, and pride, and anger, and selfishness, and envy, and jealousy, and all passions and appetites. We pray that thou wilt forgive us all the things which it was our duty to do, and which we have left undone.

We pray that thou wilt inspire us with a higher conception of manhood and duty; and day by day may we be diligent in business and fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. And we pray that we may not be so wrapped up with thinking of our own perfection and the advancement of our own spiritual purity and joy that we shall forget our brotherhood with those who are around about us—with the suffering, the ignorant, the poor, and the needy. Grant that everywhere our hearts may be open to the wants of our fellow men; that we may be in sympathy with those who are unlike us in condition; that we may be under obligation to all that are around about us; that we may be like the Master who went about doing good to the despised, to the outcast, to the neglected.

Grant that more and more the hearts of this great people may be united together in the bonds of a more perfect charity. May all the causes of disturbance and separation and animosity and opposition be taken out of our midst. We pray for that indwelling Spirit which shall bring light, and which shall kindle a fire by which the dross shall be consumed and the gold purified. We pray for that which shall unite all hearts together in this great land. Oh, forbid that we should be divided and scattered! Forbid that anything should dim the prosperity of this people. And may that prosperity spring, not from lordliness, nor arrogant power, nor overswollen

riches: may it spring, rather, from temperateness, from self-restraint from the power of godliness, from liberty and intelligence, and good-will, and the welfare of all.

And we pray that this nation may be nourished by a true Christianity, so that all men shall look upon us and long for the same power which we possess, and serve the same Christ, and rejoice in the same prosperity. Work in this great people, we beseech of thee, to will and to do of thy good pleasure,

And now, we pray that in times of excitement and division and controversy, our hearts may be held temperately; that we may look upon all things as in the light of thy countenance; that we may not be carried away violently by prejudice, nor be filled with anger. May we with patience possess our spirit in all godliness and gentleness one toward another.

We beseech of thee that thy cause may prosper in the midst of this nation. And so let thy word be fulfilled. How long shall the nations sit in darkness? How long shall the people be in ignorance? How long shall the poor abide in their poverty? How long shall the outcast and neglected remain outcast and neglected? Oh, that thou wouldst stir up the whole of thy people, descend to overturn and overturn till He whose right it is shall come and reign!

We pray that no civilization that is conceited and arrogant may be suffered to spread abroad without the leavening influence of a true Christian love therein. We pray that thou wilt be with those who need thee most—not with those who are strongest and who dominate in the counsels of men. We beseech of thee that thou wilt have compassion upon all the world according to thy promise, and that Jew and Gentile may be gathered in, and that all the earth may see thy salvation.

These mercies we ask in the adorable name of Jesus, to whom, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, shall be praises evermore. *Amen.*

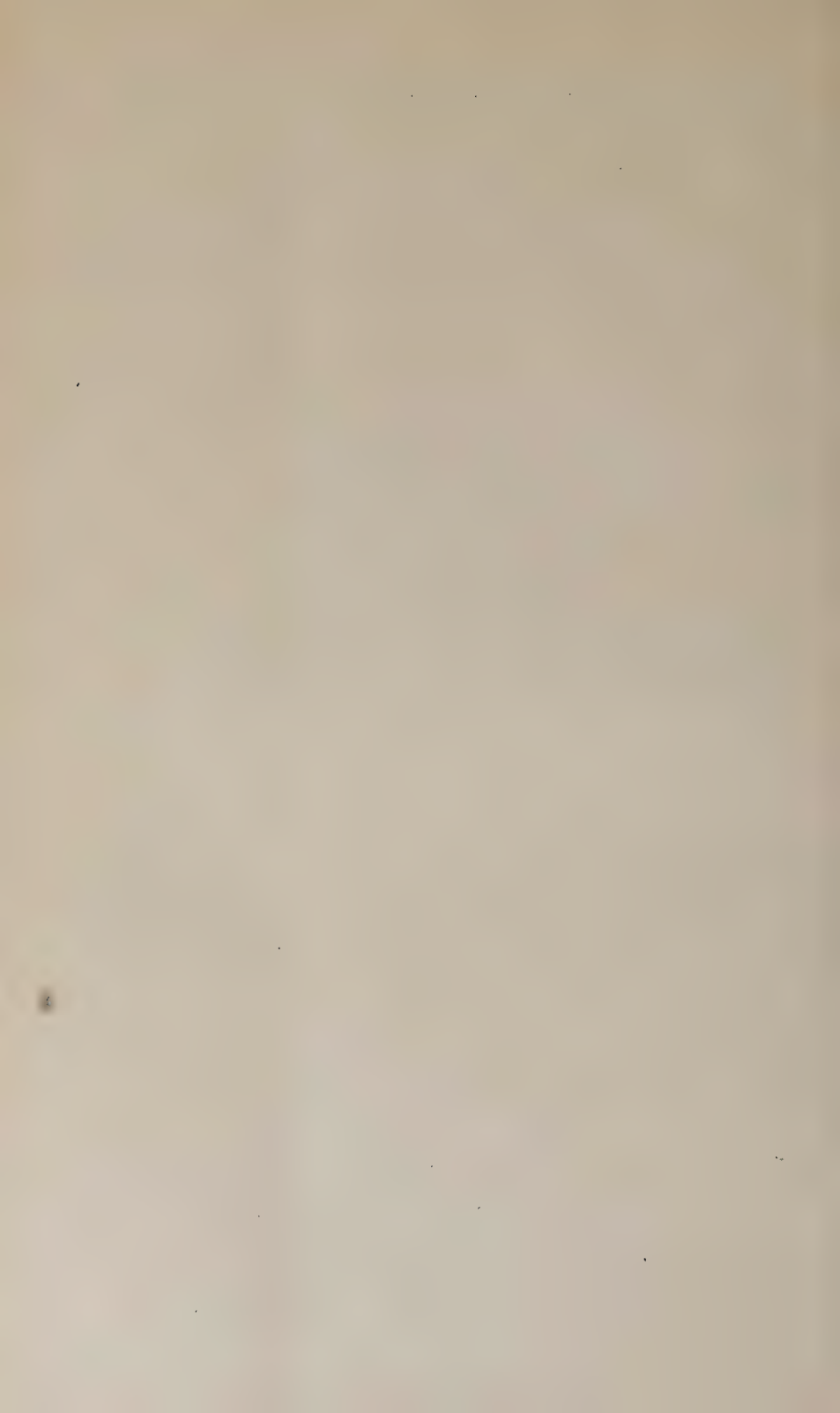
PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON.

Our Father, we beseech of thee that thou wilt bless the word of truth which has been spoken. Guide our thoughts aright. Awaken in us more than curiosity, and far more than anger. Awaken in us a desire to know what the meaning of thy providence is, and what are the ways in which thou art going. Thou comest strangely to bless the world. Thou comest with the plow, disturbing the earth. Thou dost turn up in revolution the things that were, in order that better things may be planted in their stead. Grant that we may discern thy coming; that we may anticipate it; that we may prepare the way for thee lest thou shalt come with fire, in our neglect, to prepare it for thyself. Give intelligence to those who are ignorant, and wisdom to those who lack it. Grant that all the elemental forces of society may be under the sanctifying influences of thy Spirit, and may be guided aright.

We pray for the nations of the earth. We rejoice that they are finding each other out. And if kings will not have sympathy, and governments will be selfish and arrogant and oppressive, and represent the animal and belluine qualities of human nature, may they be overruled.

We thank thee that at last among laboring men there is coming to be sympathy, and that there is the drawing of nations together in good-will. Grant that out of the movements that are inaugurated there may come a better civilization. May we accept these movements, and help carry them forward, and so be, in thy hand, an instrument for lifting up the nations of the globe. Let thy kingdom come, and thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

And to thy name shall be the praise, Father, Son, and Spirit, evermore. *Amen.*



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